

Introduction to Session 5

Session 5 is called “Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures.” Key topics include relationship violence, how violence affects women and families, and the relationship between violence and HIV and STD risk.

The agenda for Session 5 is found on the following page. The session lasts approximately two hours and there is a note that indicates the halfway point. Active discussion is an important component of this session, and it is likely to last about two and one-half hours. Please ask participants to schedule two and one-half hours for session 5.

After the agenda, there is a list of the materials, supplies, and equipment you need for Session 5.

We also provide the core elements and associated activities that apply to Session 5 to emphasize the importance of maintaining fidelity to core elements by not eliminating related discussions and activities.

Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures Agenda

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Equipment, Supplies, and Materials for Session 5

- ☐ Facilitators Guide
- ☐ Participant Workbooks
- ☐ CD of Session 5 PowerPoint slides
- ☐ LCD projector
- ☐ Laptop computer
- ☐ Screen
- ☐ Podium
- ☐ Newsprint
- ☐ Easel stand
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Pens and pencils
- ☐ Nametags
- ☐ Hat or bowl
- ☐ Tissues
- ☐ Brochures on community resources on domestic violence, mental health, social services, and immigration services, including agencies that serve children

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Core Elements

CORE ELEMENT	ACTIVITIES
<p>Core Element 1: Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate information to sexually active women at risk of acquiring HIV from unprotected sex with male partners in interactive, small group sessions that focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV and STD transmission and prevention; • human sexuality and male and female anatomy; • interpersonal communications; and • relationship violence. 	<p><u>Discussions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict resolution in healthy relationships • Relationship violence • Intimate partner violence • Characteristics of the abuser and victim • Impact of violence on families • Safety measures and action planning <p><u>Group Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True-or-false activity on sexual violence • Strategies for dealing with relationship violence
<p>Core Element 2: In addition to presentations and discussion, incorporate skill-building activities to enhance women's self-efficacy for safer sex behaviors, including demonstrations and practice exercises on male and female condom use and role-playing on assertive communication with sex partners, including condom negotiation.</p>	<p><u>Role-Plays</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dare To Say • Practicing conflict-resolution skills
<p>Core Element 3: Build self-efficacy and knowledge for safer sex behaviors, improved communication with partners, and violence management through homework exercises and the sharing of personal experiences.</p>	<p><u>Homework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework review • Homework assignment

SESSION 5: RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE, HIV RISK, AND SAFETY MEASURES

WELCOME PARTICIPANTS



Discussion



Purpose: To welcome participants back, review the key messages from Session 4, review Session 4 homework, and introduce Session 5



Needed Equipment, Supplies, and Materials: Session 5 slides 1–2, Participant Workbooks



Time: 10 minutes

Welcome back! We're already up to Session 5 and next week is our final session. I'm so happy to see you again and I sincerely thank you for taking the time to participate in SEPA.

Today we will discuss a topic that unfortunately affects too many of us. That topic is relationship violence. We will talk about domestic violence, how violence can increase your risk for HIV, and how it affects women and families. We will also explore strategies for escaping violence.

The success of today's session depends on your participation. We've discussed confidentiality before, but I want to review this critical ground rule again. Everything that is said in this group is to remain in this group. No one should repeat personal information about anyone else in the group, and you must never

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mention names. I hope that by knowing this you feel more comfortable about sharing experiences so we can learn from each other.

Relationship violence is a difficult topic to talk about. If anyone feels upset during or after our session, let me know. If anyone wants to talk more about it or has additional questions after this session, also let me know.



Facilitator's Note:

Discussion of domestic violence and intimate partner violence may disturb some participants. Be prepared to comfort women who become emotional, learn about agencies that serve victims of domestic violence for referrals, and consider distributing brochures or pamphlets on domestic and intimate partner violence. It is possible that some participants may need immediate referral and linkage to services.

Session 4 Review

Before we begin Session 5, let's review what we learned from Session 4. As a reminder, here are the Session 4 key messages.



Show Session 5 Slide 1

Session 4 Key Messages

- Couples in healthy relationships respect and trust each other and communicate about important topics, like protecting their health and not getting STDs and HIV.
- When you use assertive communication, you listen to the other person and respond in a confident way to express how you feel and what you think.
- When you make the decision to use condoms and when you use assertive communication, condom negotiation will be much easier.

SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures

Couples in healthy relationships respect and trust each other and communicate about important topics, like protecting their health and not getting STDs and HIV.

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When you use assertive communication, you listen to the other person and respond in a confident way to express how you feel and what you think, in an honest way and using “I” statements.

There are many reasons to talk to your partners about condoms. When you make the decision to use condoms and when you use assertive communication, condom negotiation will be much easier.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *How can using assertive communication help you in your relationship with your partner or husband?*

Possible responses:

- It can help me be more honest about my feelings and how I think about things.
- I hope it will help me get my partner to sit down and talk to me.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *You ask a new sex partner to wear a condom. He responds, “Real men don’t wear condoms.” What do you say?*

Possible responses:

- If you want to have a real relationship with me, you need to wear a condom until I know you better.
- I like you and want to be closer to you, but I have a policy that I always use condoms with a man I’m just getting to know.

Homework Review

Homework reinforces concepts presented during each session. During Session 4, participants were asked to practice assertive communication on any topic with a friend, family member, partner, or neighbor.

Let's spend a few minutes talking about your homework assignment.

Questions to prompt discussion:

- *Who did you talk to and how did that person respond?*
- *Did you find using assertive communication helpful?*
- *Did you find it difficult to use assertive communication?*

Possible responses:

- I was a little nervous to talk to my girlfriend about something that's been on my mind, but I did it by saying how I felt.
- The most helpful part is using "I" statements and focusing on my feelings.

After reviewing the homework assignment, answer any questions participants may have.

Do you have questions or anything you want to bring up about using assertive communication?

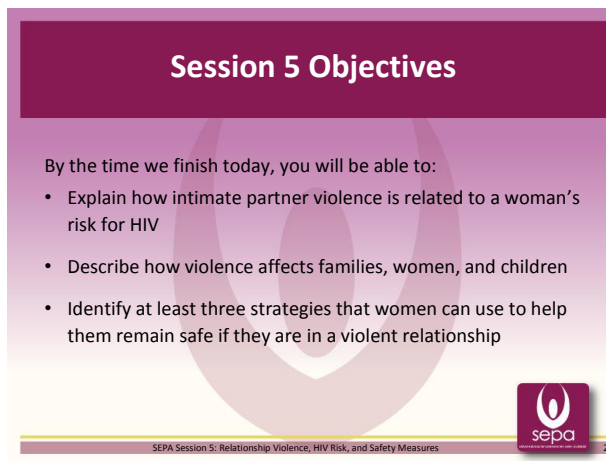
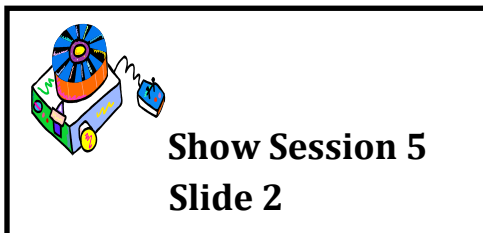
**Facilitator's Note:**

Thank participants for completing their homework and sharing with the group.

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Session Objectives

Review session objectives with SEPA participants.



Here are today's objectives. By the time we finish this session, you will be able to:

- *Explain the relationship between intimate partner violence and a woman's risk for HIV*
- *Describe how violence affects families, women, and children*
- *Identify at least three strategies that women can use to help them remain safe if they are in a violent relationship*

During the previous session, we talked about different communication styles used by couples and focused on assertive communication. During today's session, we will continue to practice assertive skills. We will also talk about domestic violence and how it affects the family. In addition, you'll learn about strategies that are often recommended to escape from domestic violence situations.

We'll begin with a role-playing exercise that should be a lot of fun.

DARE TO SAY



Role-Play



Purpose: To practice assertive communication skills



Needed Equipment, Supplies, and Materials: Participant Workbooks



Time: 15 minutes

The following role-play allows participants to practice their newly learned assertive communication skills.

Ask participants to turn to “Session 5, Worksheet 1: Dare To Say” in the workbook and read the instructions.

Think of something that you would like to say to your husband or partner but have never had the courage to say. If you are not currently married or in a relationship, think of a previous partner. Write what you would like to say in two or three sentences. Then, pick another participant to pretend to be your partner. Practice telling your partner what you wrote. Then, switch roles so each of you can practice assertive communication.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *Before you start, who can review strategies for assertive communication?*

Possible responses:

- Use “I” statements.
- Say how you feel.
- Express your emotions.
- Let the other person talk.
- Listen to the other person.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *How do you think communicating assertively with your husband or partner might affect your relationship?*

Possible responses:

- I hope it will make it better. Like we said before, we can talk more honestly to each other.
- In the beginning he might get mad, but I’ll tell him he has to get used to it.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



Discussion



Purpose: To discuss conflict resolution and its importance for a healthy relationship



Needed Equipment, Supplies, and Materials: Slide 3



Time: 10 minutes

Introduce the concept of conflict and its importance for healthy relationships. Explain that assertive communication is a good strategy to resolve conflicts in a healthy, non-violent relationship. Reinforce that if a person is in a relationship where he or she is at risk for violence, assertive communication strategies will not keep the person safe. Inform participants that we will discuss relationship violence and strategies to maintain a person's safety later in the session.

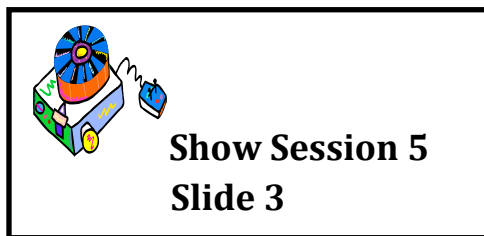
Let's talk about healthy relationships and how to resolve conflicts. Remember, conflict is a part of life and it occurs in every relationship, including family relationships and relationships with friends. Conflict is not necessarily bad. For many couples, conflicts can strengthen relationships by providing the opportunity to learn more about and understand each other. It is not the number of conflicts that is critical to determine whether a relationship is healthy but how those conflicts are resolved.

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Conflicts that are not resolved successfully can grow into arguments that can get ugly and sometimes become violent. These arguments may threaten your safety, particularly if you are in an abusive relationship. Although assertive communication may reduce conflict between two persons, it probably will not lessen violence in an abusive relationship.

When a conflict occurs in a relationship, both partners should try to resolve the conflict. Remember: Conflict occurs because each person has a different perspective on the situation.

We have talked about healthy relationships being based on open and assertive communication where each partner can speak comfortably and honestly. When couples in healthy relationships have conflicts and choose to avoid communication, those couples are at risk for relationship problems.



Techniques to Help Resolve Conflicts between Couples

- **Stop:** When you feel yourself getting angry and about to say something you will regret, stop the argument.
- **Assert:** Use "I" statements to explain to your partner how you are feeling, what the problem is, how his behavior affects your feelings, and what you would like to happen.
- **Listen:** Remember that being assertive also means that you listen to your partner's thoughts and feelings.
- **Resolve:** Think of solutions that satisfy both of you. Sometimes this requires compromise.



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Here are some techniques that may help you resolve conflicts with a partner when a conversation turns into an argument.

- *Stop. When you feel that you are getting angry and about to say something you will regret, stop the argument. Tell your partner that you need a time out or need to take a deep breath.*

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- *Assert. Use “I” statements to explain how you are feeling, what the problem is, how his behavior affects your feelings, and what you would like to happen.*
- *Listen. Remember that being assertive also means that you listen to your partner’s thoughts and feelings.*
- *Resolve. Think of solutions that satisfy both of you. Sometimes this requires compromise.*

Question to prompt discussion:

- *Can anyone share examples of conflicts from current or past relationships? How have you resolved these conflicts?*

Possible responses:

- We broke up.
- We had a big fight but then we worked it out.
- I made him sit down and talk to me.

PRACTICING CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS



Role-Play



Purpose: To practice conflict resolution skills



Needed Equipment, Supplies, and Materials: Participant Workbooks



Time: 10 minutes

Learning how to resolve conflicts takes practice. The following role-play will help participants develop conflict resolution skills.

Let's practice resolving conflicts. Pick a partner and select one of the scenarios from "Session 5, Worksheet 2: Conflict Resolution" in your workbooks. Begin with a small argument and then practice strategies to resolve the conflict.

Both of you need to practice conflict resolution.

After participants have practiced, ask for volunteers to demonstrate and then discuss whether the conflict resolution techniques they used would be helpful in their relationships.

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Questions to prompt discussion:

- *Who would like to show us your conflict resolution skills?*
- *How does using conflict resolution skills feel?*

Possible responses:

- I was so angry, I had to calm down and then use “I” statements.
- I didn’t want to compromise, but I did.
- When I listened to his side of the story, I felt a little better.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *How do you think conflict resolution skills can help you in current or future relationships?*

Possible responses:

- They can help prevent a big fight.
- I think they can help me stay calm when I get very angry.
- They will help me to remember that I have to compromise.

RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE



Discussion and Group Activity



Purpose: To identify the different types of relationship violence, to learn the facts about sexual violence, and to learn about the relationship between partner violence and HIV



Needed Equipment, Supplies, and Materials: Slides 4–10



Time: 25 minutes

Sometimes our best conflict resolution skills will not prevent violence in personal relationships. Let's turn to issues in relationship violence, including domestic and intimate partner violence.



Facilitator's Note:

Be prepared to make referrals as needed and respond to participants who appear to be upset by the conversation. You might want to read “An Overview of Intimate Partner Violence Among Latinos” by Joanne Klevens, at: <http://vaw.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/13/2/111>. You may also want to make connections with local agencies that address domestic violence prior to this session to help facilitate referrals if needed.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *How do you define intimate partner violence?*

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Possible responses:

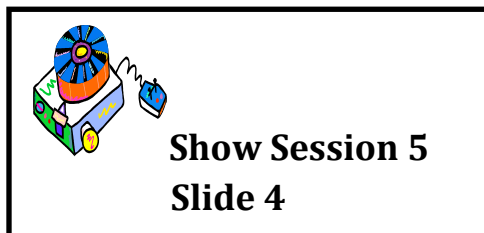
- When your boyfriend hits you.
- When your boyfriend or husband pushes you around.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *What is the difference between intimate partner violence and domestic violence?*

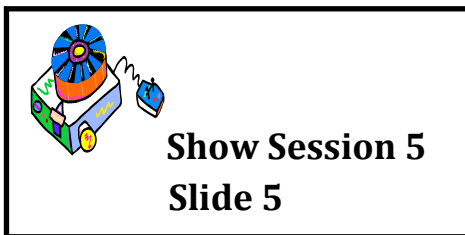
Possible response:

- I think domestic violence can come from people other than your boyfriend or partner.



In SEPA, we define relationship violence as an intentional pattern of threatening behaviors that may include physical, emotional, economic, and sexual abuse. Types of violence and abuse include:

- *Domestic violence*
- *Intimate partner violence*
- *Emotional abuse*
- *Economic abuse*
- *Sexual violence*




Types of Abuse

Domestic violence

- Takes place between members of a family
- Includes threats, physical abuse, and attacks against property
- Includes emotional abuse, economic abuse, and sexual violence

Intimate partner violence

- Takes place between persons in a current or former sexual relationship
- Includes threats, physical abuse, and attacks against property
- Includes emotional abuse, economic abuse, and sexual violence

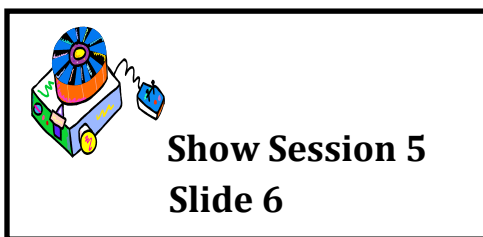


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Domestic violence takes place between members of a family.

Domestic violence includes threats of violence and physical harm, as well as actual physical harm and attacks against property and pets. Domestic violence can also include the emotional abuse, economic abuse, and sexual violence found in intimate partner violence.


Intimate partner violence is abuse that takes place between two people in a sexual relationship. It includes physical abuse, threats of abuse, sexual violence, and emotional and economic abuse. The term “intimate partner” includes current and former husbands and boyfriends.



Types of Abuse

- Emotional abuse
 - Includes threats, intimidation, name-calling, criticism; making demands, ignoring, and insulting the victim
- Economic abuse
 - Abuser prevents the victim from having economic security
- Sexual violence
 - Any type of unwanted sexual activity
 - Includes rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, peeping, forced nude photos, forced voyeurism, and exhibitionism

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Emotional or psychological abuse can be as painful as or even more painful than physical abuse. Examples of emotional abuse include ridicule, threats, intimidation, and name-calling. The abuser is critical, insulting, argumentative, and demanding and may ignore or isolate his victims.

Economic abuse occurs when the abuser prevents the victim from having economic security and the ability to take care of herself or himself. For example, an abuser may prevent his partner from going to school, getting a job, or having a bank account.

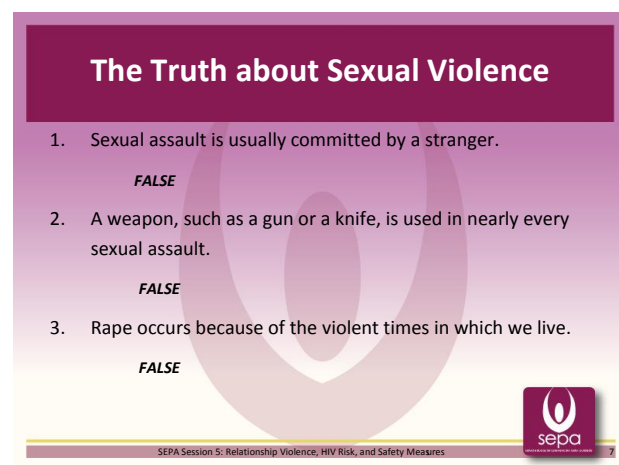
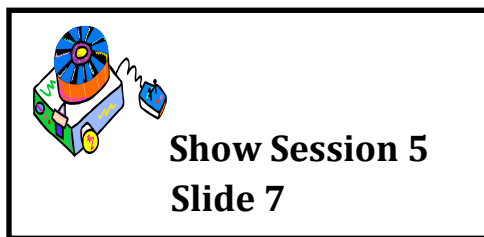
Sexual violence is any type of sexual activity that a person does not agree to have. There are many types of sexual violence — not all include physical contact. Examples of sexual violence are rape, including marital rape; sexual harassment; peeping; taking nude photos; voyeurism (when someone watches private sexual acts); and exhibitionism (when someone exposes herself or himself in public).

Sexual Violence

The following true-or-false activity focuses on sexual violence. A woman's risk of getting infected with HIV increases if she is a victim of sexual violence.

Ask participants to read a statement from the slides, and then ask the group to vote either true or false. Provide the correct answer after each vote.

Let's try another true-and-false activity. This one focuses on what we know, or think we know, about sexual assault.



Sexual assault is usually committed by a stranger.

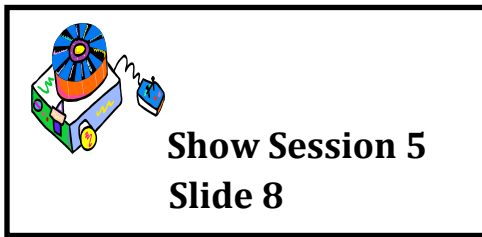
Answer: *This is false.*

A weapon, such as a gun or a knife, is used in nearly every sexual assault.

Answer: *This is false.*

Rape occurs because of the violent times in which we live.


Answer: *This is false. Remember that rape is about anger and power, not sex.*



The Truth about Sexual Violence

4. Women can prevent sexual assault by dressing modestly.
FALSE
5. A wife should have sex with her husband whenever he wants, regardless of how she feels.
FALSE
6. Sexual violence is a problem that should be handled by the family.
FALSE

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Women can prevent sexual assault by dressing modestly.

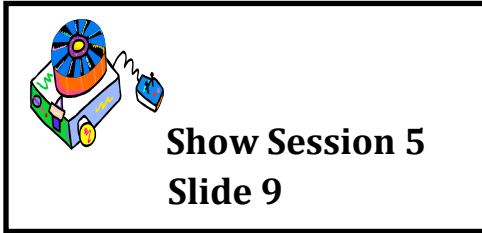
Answer: *This, again, is false.*

A wife should have sex with her husband whenever he wants, regardless of how she feels.

Answer: *False.*

Sexual violence is a problem that should be handled by the family.


Answer: *False. Women who have been sexually assaulted should get support and services from persons and organizations that specialize in sexual violence and assault. Many types of sexual violence are serious crimes.*



The Truth about Sexual Violence

7. If your boyfriend buys you something nice, you owe him sex.
FALSE
8. There is no such thing as sexual violence between a husband and wife.
FALSE
9. Sexual assault of a woman by her husband cannot result in an STD.
FALSE

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If your boyfriend buys you something nice, you owe him sex.

Answer: *This is false. You never owe a man sex.*

There is no such thing as sexual violence between a husband and wife.

Answer: *This is false.*

Sexual assault of a woman by her husband cannot result in an STD.

Answer: *False.*

Question to prompt discussion:

- *Does it surprise you to hear so many myths about sexual violence? Why or why not?*

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Possible responses:

- No, because there is a lot of violence in our community.
- No, because Latino men drink and drug too much.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *Do you think that marital rape should be a crime?*

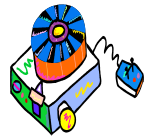
Wait for responses.

Fact: Marital rape is a crime in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Why Are We Talking About Sexual Violence in an HIV Prevention Program?

Explain to participants that there is a relationship between HIV risk and sexual violence.

We are discussing sexual violence in SEPA because there is a relationship between sexual violence and a woman's risk of getting infected with HIV.



Show Session 5 Slide 10

Sexual Violence and HIV Risk

- A woman's risk of HIV infection increases when force is used during sex because of physical damage to the vagina.
- The risk of transmission is higher in girls and young women because girls' vaginal tracts tear easily during intercourse.
- Sexual abuse during childhood and forced sex during adolescence are associated with increased HIV risk-taking behaviors among women.
- Childhood sexual assault is associated with low rates of condom use by adults.



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A woman's risk of HIV infection increases when force is used during sex because of physical damage to the vagina.

The risk of transmission is likely to be higher in girls and young women because girls' vaginal tracts tear easily during intercourse.

According to the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, sexual abuse during childhood and forced sex during adolescence are associated with increased HIV risk-taking behaviors among women.

Childhood sexual assault is associated with low rates of condom use by adults.



Facilitator's Note:

At this point, you should be halfway through implementation of Session 5.

Right now we are about halfway through Session 5. Are there any questions?

Would anyone like to share what you think or feel about the issues we are discussing today?

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE



Discussion



Purpose: To discuss intimate partner violence; characteristics of abusers and victims; and how intimate partner violence relates to HIV and its impact on family



Needed Equipment, Supplies, and Materials: Slides 11–17, newsprint, markers



Time: 30 minutes

The goal of this discussion is to highlight the prevalence of intimate partner violence and discuss the cycle of intimate partner violence.

Now we will focus on intimate partner violence and see how it takes place in a cycle that makes it difficult for many women to escape.



Show Session 5 Slide 11

The Truth about Intimate Partner Violence

- Violent relationships are not healthy relationships.
- 1 in every 4 women in the United States will experience domestic violence during her lifetime.
- An estimated 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year.
- Men can also be victims of intimate partner violence.



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Violent relationships are not healthy relationships.

Unfortunately, many women are the victims of intimate partner violence. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, one in every four women in the United States will experience domestic violence during her lifetime, and, an estimated 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year.

Men can also be victims of intimate partner violence. However, the vast majority of victims are women.



Show Session 5 Slide 12

The Truth about Intimate Partner Violence

- Women are more likely than men to be stalked by intimate partners.
- In all forms of violence, control is a key issue.
- When a woman is being controlled by an abusive partner, it is extremely difficult for her to protect herself from HIV and STDs.



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Women are more likely than men to be stalked by intimate partners.

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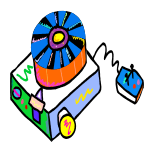
In all forms of violence, control is a key issue. The abuser – often called a batterer -- believes he is entitled to control his victim.

When a woman is being controlled by an abusive partner, it is extremely difficult for her to practice HIV and STD prevention.

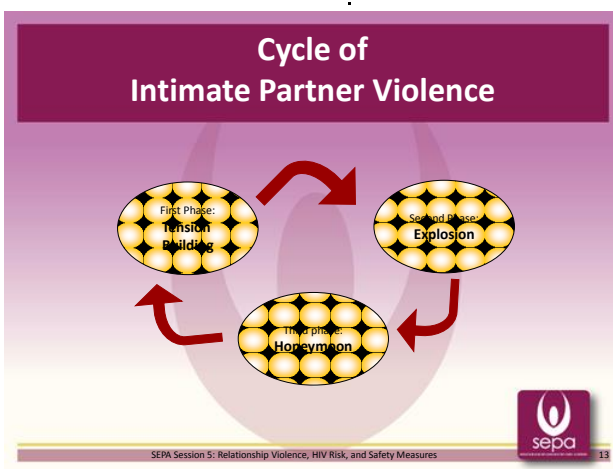


Facilitator's Note:

For more information on domestic and intimate partner violence, see the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence at <http://www.ncadv.org/>, and see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/intimatepartnerviolence/index.html>.



**Show Session 5
Slide 13**



Intimate partner violence is cyclical. This means that the abuse is repeated and happens in phases. We call the first phase the tension building phase. In this phase, there is an increase in the tension between the partners, with the abuser becoming increasingly controlling. During this phase, the abuse is subtle and psychological abuse, such as ridicule, intimidation, and isolation, tends to occur.

This phase may last for days or even months. Examples of what can happen with the abuser include:

- *The abuser shows a mixture of controlling behaviors, such as jealousy and emotional abuse, along with good days of being an attentive, loving partner.*
- *The abuser may start arguments about such matters as the children, pets, and money.*
- *He may accuse his partner of infidelity.*

Examples of what can happen with the victim in the tension-building phase include:

- *The victim may experience uncertainty, anxiety, and fear.*
- *She may rationalize or make excuses for the abuser's behavior, including blaming herself.*
- *Even if the victim tries to appease her abusive partner, the second phase of intimate partner violence will occur.*

We call the second phase the explosion phase. It can last up to a few days. In the explosion phase, there is an act of physical violence that can vary in degree from a shove to homicide. In this phase:

- *The victim may experience sexual abuse and serious physical and psychological injuries.*
- *There may be physical destruction of property.*
- *The victim may minimize her injuries to appease her partner.*

The third phase of intimate partner violence is referred to as the honeymoon phase. In this phase, the abusive partner feels regret and asks for forgiveness. He may promise that it will never happen again. This third phase can last for a few months. During the honeymoon phase:

- The victim may accept her partner's apologies and expressions of romance.*
- The abuser may blame his behavior on drinking or drugs and promise to "get clean."*
- The abuser may plead with the victim not to leave, give her gifts, and remind her how wonderful things were and could be again.*

Characteristics of the Abuser and Victim

There are some characteristics that are common among abusive persons. Victims also share some common characteristics. Do you remember our discussion about self-esteem from Session 4?

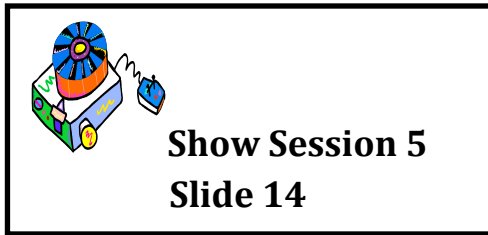
Question to prompt discussion:

- Do you think a person in a violent relationship has high or low self-esteem?*

Possible responses:

- Low self-esteem — she would not put up with abuse otherwise.
- Maybe she has high self-esteem. She might love her husband and children and not leave a violent relationship because of the children.

- She could have high self-esteem and stand by her man.




Characteristics of an Abuser

A violent or abusive person will typically exhibit:

- A sense of ownership over victims
- A need for control
- A heightened sense of authority
- A belief that he does nothing wrong
- An ability to justify his actions to himself and others

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A violent or abusive person will typically exhibit:

- *A sense of ownership over victims. An abuser feels that his victims are his property and that he can force them to behave in a certain manner.*
- *A need for control. The abuser tries to control the behavior and attitudes of his partner and may act in a controlling way toward other members of the family.*
- *A heightened sense of authority. The abuser feels he has the authority to determine what are correct and incorrect behaviors and attitudes in his family.*
- *A belief that he does nothing wrong. The abuser believes his actions are the result of his partner's actions and, therefore, the partner is to blame.*
- *An ability to justify his actions to himself and others.*




Characteristics of a Victim

A victim may exhibit such characteristics as:

- Confusion about her partner
- Fear or terror
- Shame, humiliation, guilt
- Dependency, helplessness, indecision
- Isolating herself from friends and family
- Minimization and denial of the abuse, including protection of the abusive partner

It is important to remember there is no one type of woman who is a victim. Violence affects all women regardless of age, race, ethnicity, and income.



SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures

A victim may exhibit such characteristics as:

- *Confusion about her feelings toward her partner*
- *Fear or terror*
- *Shame, humiliation, guilt*
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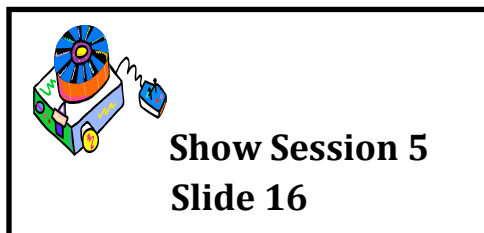
It is important to remember there is no one type of woman who is a victim. Violence can affect all women, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, and income. This is just like HIV – any woman, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, and income – can get infected if she has unprotected sex with an infected partner.

Questions to prompt discussion:

- *Do you have questions or anything you want to say about the issues we have been discussing?*
- *Does the cycle of intimate partner violence make sense to you?*

Why Are We Talking About Intimate Partner Violence in an HIV Prevention Program?


Explain to participants that there is a relationship between HIV and intimate partner violence.



HIV Risk, HIV Infection, and Intimate Partner Violence

If a woman has an abusive partner:

- She may be subject to violence when she tells him that she is HIV positive.
- She may be subject to violence when she asks him to get an HIV test or to use a condom.
- Because of intimate partner violence and fear, she may not get tested for HIV or STDs.



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There is a relationship between HIV risk, HIV infection, and intimate partner violence.

Women can experience intimate partner violence from an abusive partner if they become infected with HIV or if they try to prevent infection. More specifically, a woman is subject to violence when she tells an abusive partner that she is HIV positive. An abusive partner may prevent her from receiving medical care, and this will pose a threat to her health.

A woman is also vulnerable to violence when she asks an abusive partner to get an HIV test or to use a condom.

Because of intimate partner violence and fear, women may not get tested for HIV or STDs. If HIV and STDs are not treated, serious physical harm can occur.



HIV Risk, HIV Infection, and Intimate Partner Violence

- Women in violent relationships may be at risk for HIV because they are afraid to discuss condoms with their partners.
- Women who are victims of intimate partner violence and who have a history of violence may engage in risky sexual behaviors.

SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures



Women in violent relationships may be at risk for HIV because they are afraid to discuss condoms with their partners. By not using condoms, women are not able to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases.

Women who are victims of intimate partner violence and who have a history of violence may engage in risky sexual behaviors; therefore, they are at an increased risk for HIV infection. Examples of risky behaviors are having unprotected sex with multiple partners or partners outside of marriage, having sex while high from alcohol or other drugs, and commercial sex work, or prostitution.

Impact of Violence on Families

Explain to participants that domestic violence and intimate partner violence impact the whole family.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *How does violence affect the family?*

Write participant responses on the newsprint.

Possible responses:

- Physical injuries and illnesses
- Possible death
- Depression, anxiety, and other mental health problems
- Suspicion and fear
- Decrease in family communication

Domestic violence and intimate partner violence not only affect women, they impact everyone in the home, including the children. Even though women may think their children are safe because their partners have never abused them, children and adolescents who live in homes where domestic violence occurs or where they witness intimate partner violence are likely to experience behavioral and learning problems. They may have problems at school, abuse drugs and alcohol, and engage in risky sexual behaviors, putting themselves at risk of getting infected with HIV and other STDs. Children and adolescents are likely to experience mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, as a result of exposure to family violence. Some may develop poor health. Just like their mothers, children may need counseling to better cope with their problems.

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE



Discussion and Group Activity



Purpose: To identify why women stay in abusive relationships, and specific strategies and actions that women can take if they are in a violent relationship



Needed Equipment, Supplies, and Materials: Participant Workbooks, newsprint, markers, Slides 18–22



Time: 10 minutes

It's important for women to know specific strategies they can use to remain safe. The following activity focuses on why women stay in abusive relationships and what actions can be used to get out of or minimize the violent situation.

It's time to have another group activity. Let's get into two groups.

Divide participants into two groups.

One group will discuss why women stay in abusive relationships. The other group will discuss what you should do if your partner becomes violent and attacks you.

SEPA Facilitators Guide

Refer participants to “Session 5, Worksheet 3: Relationship Violence Scenarios.” Ask participants to discuss their topics. Tell the groups to identify a presenter for each group. After approximately five minutes, ask each group to present what they discussed.

Mention the following if not discussed.

Reasons why women stay with their aggressors include:

- Love
- Economic dependence
- Children
- Social pressure
- Machismo/Marianismo
- Not knowing what to do
- Fear of legal and immigration problems
- Not knowing where to get help

What to do if you are attacked:

- Get treatment for any injuries
- Call 911
- Leave the house and follow the steps in your action plan

SEPA Facilitators Guide

Question to prompt discussion:

- *If a friend told you she was living with a man who beat her up when he got drunk, what would you do?*

Possible responses:

- I'd tell her to leave him — she shouldn't put up with that.
- I would suggest that she talk to him when he's sober and give him information on programs for alcoholics.
- I would tell her to go to a program for family members of alcoholics, like Al-Anon.

Question to prompt discussion:

- *How would you talk about intimate partner violence with your daughter? What types of things could you mention?*

Possible responses:

- I wouldn't say anything unless she was involved with a violent man.
- I'd tell her never to get involved with someone who is abusive.
- I would point out the cycle of violence and that violent men don't change over night.

Safety Measures and Action Planning

Many women are involved with abusive partners and need strategies to keep themselves safe. The following discussion reviews strategies that women can take to maintain safety when a violent situation happens.

If you are involved with an abusive partner, the most important thing is that you stay safe and that any children in the household stay safe. Whether you leave or stay with your partner, your safety is our primary concern.

There are some things a woman can do to keep herself and her children safe. Reporting the abuse to the police is one option. If you are not able to or choose not to report an abusive incident to the police, and if you cannot or choose not to leave your partner, there are measures you can take to help your family stay safe.

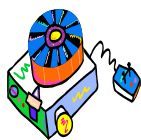
Question to prompt discussion:

- *What suggestions do you have for women who are in violent relationships but choose to stay with their partners?*

Write suggestions on the newsprint.

Possible responses:

- They should go into therapy or join a support group.
- They can take a class in self-defense.
- These women should talk to their children and provide advice on what the children should do.
- They should make sure their children get counseling.



Show Session 5 Slide 18

How To Increase Safety in a Violent Relationship

Safety measures that you can take: You do have options

- Design a plan of action
- Report the abuse to the police



SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures

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Unfortunately, there are times when a woman may need to get away from her abusive partner when violence is about to take place or even when it is occurring. Creating an action plan can help.



Show Session 5 Slide 19

Action Plans for Women in Violent Relationships

- Hide weapons, firearms, or other objects in the house that can be used as weapons.
- Tell your children not to interfere when violence occurs.
- Plan an escape route from the apartment or house.
 - Identify windows and doors to use to get out of your apartment or house.
- Memorize emergency and family telephone numbers.



SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures

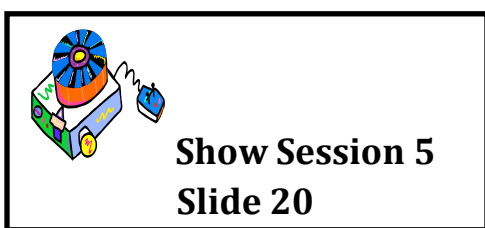
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If you are a woman in a violent relationship at home alone, you should hide weapons and objects that can inflict harm. It's probably best not to get a weapon to defend yourself because your partner could get it away from you and use it against you. In addition, weapons pose a threat to your children.

Tell your children and any dependent family members living with you not to interfere when violence occurs, but to stay away from the incident.

Plan an escape route from the apartment or house by identifying windows and doors that can be used to get out quickly. If possible, plan more than one way to escape.


Memorize emergency and family telephone numbers. Phone numbers should not be written down or stored in your cell phone because your partner may find them and become suspicious. Suspensions may trigger a violent episode.



Action Plans for Women in Violent Relationships

- Pack an emergency suitcase for yourself and your children and keep it in a safe place, such as a friend's house.
- Agree on signs or codes that you can use with a neighbor to tell him or her that you need help.
- Identify a safe place where you and your children can go and know how you can get there.
- Learn about local shelters or safe houses that you can use.

SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures

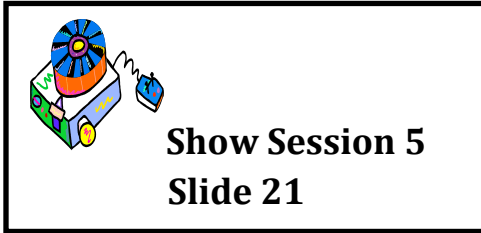


Pack a suitcase for yourself and your children with clothing, medications, cash, and important papers, such as documents of identification, passports, and immigration papers. Keep the suitcase in a safe place, such as a friend's house.

If you trust a neighbor not to talk to your partner, agree on signs or codes that you can use to tell him or her you need help. For example, you can open or close the window shades or curtains, or turn the lights on and off.

Identify a safe place where you and your children can go and know how to get there. Avoid going to the homes of friends or acquaintances who are also friends of the abuser. Make sure you have enough money for a taxi or to use public transportation.

Learn about local shelters or safe houses that you can use.



What to Do When you Are About to be Attacked

- Follow the escape route in your action plan and go to a safe place.
- If escape is not possible:
 - Go to an area of your apartment or house that minimizes potential harm; avoid the bathroom and kitchen.
 - Try to stay in a room with a telephone or use your cell phone to call 911 if you decide to call the police.
 - Trust your judgment.
 - If all else fails and you are being attacked, protect yourself as best you can.



SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures

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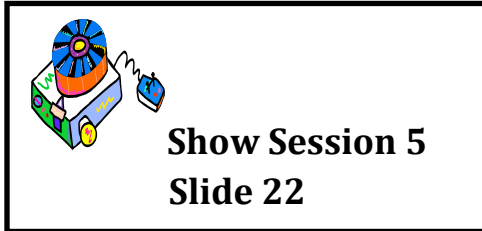
An action plan enables you to be prepared when you are threatened or attacked, or when you feel that violence is about to happen. Taking action may protect you and your children.

When violence is about to happen, follow the escape route in your action plan. Go to the safe place you identified and consider calling the police.

If you are about to be attacked and you can't escape, here are some things you can do:


- *Go to an area of your apartment or house that minimizes potential harm. Don't use a bathroom because it has hard surfaces. Don't use the kitchen because knives can be used as weapons.*
- *Try to stay in a room with a telephone or use your cell phone to call 911 if you decide to call the police. If you don't want to call the police, use the signal you agreed on with a friend or neighbor to let them know that you need help. Try to communicate if there are weapons in the home.*
- *Trust your judgment. Consider anything that you think will keep you safe and give you time to figure out what to do next. Sometimes it is best to flee; sometimes it may be best to try to win over your partner so he will calm down. Do what you believe is best to care for yourself and your children.*

- *If all else fails and you are being attacked, put your arms and hands over your face and around your head. Try to cover your ribs with your elbows.*



What to Do if You Decide to Report the Abuse

- You can call 911 to reach the police and report an attack.
- You can visit the local police station to report an attack.
- Make sure the police take photographs of any injuries.
- Tell the police you want an order of protection, sometimes called a restraining order. The order is a legal document issued by a court; it requires one person to stop harming another person.

SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures

If you decide to report the abuse:

- *You can call 911 to reach the police and report an attack.*
- *You can visit the local police station to report an attack.*
- *When you make a report, make sure the police take photographs of any injuries. Talk to the police about obtaining an order of protection or a restraining order. This is a legal document that requires the abuser to not contact or approach you.*

Questions to prompt discussion:

- *What is your reaction to the information that we have just discussed?*
- *What do you think about the safety measures and action planning we just reviewed?*

SEPA Facilitators Guide

- *What are the pros and cons or positive and negative aspects of reporting abuse to the police?*
- *If your best friend or sister were in an abusive relationship, would you want her to do these things?*

Possible responses:

- If you call the police, your partner will be furious and it can make the violence worse.
- You should call the police and get him removed from the house.
- Definitely get an order of protection.

What else do you want to say about the topic of violence and HIV risk? Do you have questions or comments?

If anyone wants more information on domestic violence, please let me know. I can connect you to agencies that can assist you and your children with your concerns.

Important Information for Non-Citizens

Now I want to tell you about programs and services that are available to everyone, regardless of immigration status. Examples include crisis counseling, child protection services, adult protective services, treatment for mental illness and substance abuse, and community food banks. Contact local immigrant services agencies for more information. You can find these agencies by searching the internet, telephone book, or talking to friends who may know about services in your community.

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Undocumented immigrants who are victims of domestic violence can apply for relief under a federal law called the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). VAWA allows abused spouses and children of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to obtain permanent resident status.

If you are legally married to a U.S. citizen or a lawful permanent resident, and you are abused by your spouse, you can self-petition for lawful status in the United States. Abused children of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents can also self-petition.

If you are legally married to a U.S. citizen or a lawful permanent resident, and you are abused by your spouse, VAWA provides relief from deportation or removal from the United States. In addition, VAWA provides relief for you and your children if they have been abused, even if you have not.

For information on VAWA, contact a domestic violence advocate and/or an attorney. Other legal services for women experiencing violence can be obtained by calling the Legal Resource Center on Violence Against Women: 1-800-556-4053.



Facilitator's Note:

Look up information on local domestic violence, social service, mental health, and immigrant service agencies and provide the information to participants at the end of the session. Include information on agencies that serve children.

WRAP-UP ACTIVITIES



Time: 10 minutes

Review key messages, assign homework, and provide time for session evaluations.

Now we will review the main ideas we have discussed today.



Review

Refer participants to “Session 5, Worksheet 4: Session 5 Key Messages” in their workbooks. Show Slides 23–24 as key messages are reviewed.



**Show Session 5
Slide 23**

Session 5 Key Messages

- Violent relationships are not healthy relationships and they make it very difficult for women to negotiate condom use.
- Domestic violence negatively affects the physical and mental health of all members of the family.
- Intimate partner violence usually occurs in a cycle of three phases:
 - tension building phase
 - explosive phase
 - honeymoon phase

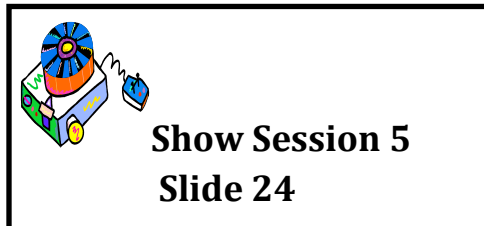
SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures



Violent relationships are not healthy relationships and they make it very difficult for women to negotiate condom use and protect their overall health.

Domestic violence negatively affects the physical and mental health of all members of the family.

Intimate partner violence usually occurs in a cycle of three phases: the tension-building phase, the explosive phase, and the honeymoon phase.



Session 5 Key Messages


- Due in part to the cyclical nature of intimate partner violence and other considerations, such as economic dependence and fear, some women find it hard to leave abusive partners.
- Women who are victims of intimate partner violence can take measures to protect their safety and the safety of their children by designing a plan of action, reporting abuse to the police, and using community resources for victims of domestic and intimate partner violence.

SEPA Session 5: Relationship Violence, HIV Risk, and Safety Measures



Due in part to the cyclical nature of intimate partner violence and other considerations, such as economic dependence and fear, some women find it hard to leave abusive partners.

Women who are victims of intimate partner violence can take measures to protect their safety and the safety of their children by designing a plan of action, reporting abuse to the police, and using community resources for victims of intimate partner violence.



Facilitator's Note:

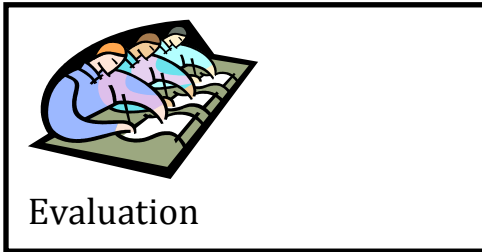
Remember that you are a resource for participants. Let them know that you are available if they want to talk, need help, or need more information on topics discussed during SEPA.



Homework

Refer participants to “Session 5, Worksheet 5: Homework – Discuss Family Violence” in their workbooks.

Your final homework assignment is to discuss the issue of domestic violence with another woman in your community. Share what you learned today during the conversation. Come prepared to tell us what happened during the next session.



Refer participants to “Session 5, Worksheet 6: Session 5 Evaluation” in their workbooks. Ask participants to complete the evaluation worksheet.

Before we leave, please complete your evaluation sheets. When you are finished, tear the sheets out of your workbook and give them to me. I will use your feedback to improve SEPA.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you at our next session, which is [date/day/time]. It will be our last session. We will review what we have learned from each other and celebrate together.

**Facilitator’s Note:**

Remind participants that you are available if they want to talk or need more information. Let them know you have information on agencies that can help them and their children.